

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 257 700

SO 016 448

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TITLE Wilhelm von Humboldt's Idea of "Bildung" and Education.
PUB DATE 77
NOTE 56p.; Master's Thesis, University of London.
PUB TYPE Dissertations/Theses - Master Theses (042) -- Historical Materials (060)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Educational History; *Educational Philosophy; Elementary Secondary Education; European History; Higher Education; Human Dignity; Individual Development; School Role
IDENTIFIERS Enlightenment Thought; *Humboldt (Wilhelm von)

ABSTRACT

The importance of Wilhelm von Humboldt's work in educational philosophy is little known outside of Germany and even there he is more often criticized than praised. This is unfortunate because his contributions to education and other areas had an important impact on other philosophers of his period and are well worth considering today. In his main work, "Ideen zu einem Versuch die Grenzen der Wirksamkeit des Staates zu bestimmen," Humboldt envisages education extending throughout an individual's life. Education would not be limited to the wealthy but would be available to all. The reform of the individual would then bring about the reform of the state by peaceful means. In these ideas and others, Humboldt was strongly influenced by Hellenistic ideals as well as the philosophers of the Enlightenment. Education was seen as a process of developing individual consciousness and one which should not be contaminated by becoming the instrument of such forces as the economy, the government, or even the universities. Although Humboldt's ideas were not successfully implemented, the issues he raised about the importance of education and the role of educational institutions remain with us. (IS)

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WILHELM VON HUMBOLDT'S IDEA OF BILDUNG AND EDUCATION

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1972

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
Introduction	3
Wilhelm von Humboldt's Idea of <u>Bildung</u> and Education	7
Conclusion	48
Bibliography	53

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INTRODUCTION

Humboldt's work contributed not only to education and Bildung, but also to civilization and humanity as a whole. In his lifetime he was known to his friends and, in his official capacity, to his colleagues, as a lawyer, a minister of internal affairs, and a Prussian delegate to the Papal Court. To the Congress of Vienna, he was known as a Prussian plenipotentiary and ambassador to London.

The real value of this man's greatness became known only after his death, when his work was finally published in its entirety in 1852 by his brother, the famous naturalist Alexander. Wilhelm was a legitimate son and heir of the German bourgeois culture of the eighteenth century, which produced not only Herder, Goethe, Schiller, Holderlin, Keller, Storm and Fontane, but also Nietzsche and Marx. Humboldt was so much a Neo-Humanist that his background was completely obliterated by his personality.

Other than in the linguistic world, little is known of Humboldt's ideas outside Germany, but a wealth of material exists there about his work, theories and reforms. He is criticized more than he is praised since his work is not as yet realized to the full, although in Berlin his name is imprinted indelibly on the university and is associated with other institutions named after him, for example,

Joachimsthaler Gymnasium. He was, however, known to John Stuart Mill, whom he inspired to write On Liberty, and to another eminent Victorian, Matthew Arnold. Humboldt's work was published five years before that of Mill, and Mill's frequent references to him suggest that he had known Humboldt's work. Herbert Spencer's Social Statics [1851] was also based on Humboldt's inspiration.

Coulthard's translation of Humboldt's work was first published in England in 1856 under the title The Sphere and Duties of Government. Humboldt died in 1859, leaving behind him reforms which still have a beneficial effect today.

Humboldt's obsession with action, both physical and mental, was astounding. His travelling brought him into all the countries of Europe, where he not only studied the languages but also the culture and social conditions. This made him a true cosmopolitan. Alongside his other activities, he instituted reforms which were put into practice. He was not a pagan in the sense that he is made out to be by his critics, but he had a deep faith in the goodness of human beings, both in their aspirations and in their limitations. His vision of a better world for the individual and the society in which he lived made him a seer of extraordinary perception, but the reforms which he envisaged--contrary to many others--were realized within his lifetime. His doctrine was not a mere curriculum, but a preparation for life. Goethe's own words express Humboldt's personality best: "das Edle suchen und streben nach dem Bessern."

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The Ancients had opened the doors to Humboldt's humanism and study of antiquity, although in later years he was drawn to Indian philosophy, the Bhagavadgita and Sanskrit. He recalled in his diary that the French Revolution gave him the incentive to create something: "jetzt fühle ich, dass es nur schon zu hohe Zeit ist, etwas hervorzubringen einen Beweis zu hinterlassen, dass man verdient, dagewesen zu sein." Humboldt fulfilled this task in the truest sense of the word.

His main work, Ideen zu einem Versuch die Grenzen der Wirksamkeit des Staates zu bestimmen, is, on the whole, in contrast to the reality of social life. It was a vehicle for Humboldt's ideas about Man and of the ways in which the State ought to be responsible for the happiness of the individual.

Humboldt had seen the French Revolution at close hand, and the uprising which had resulted when the masses were unable to control their emotions. In 1789, he saw ideas on the preservation of human dignity laid down in the "Declaration of the Rights of Man". Ideen, on the whole, cannot be considered a political work, but rather a series of essays on morals, religion, education and aesthetics. In the early part of it, Humboldt envisages an education extending throughout life. Up to that time, only the enlightened aristocracy had been able to partake in Bildung. "Church" and "Burgerschulen" did, however, exist. Humboldt realised that human freedom had to supersede political freedom. The "Declaration of the Rights of Man" was the realisation of the principles which all the philosophes and Neo-Humanists of the Age of Enlightenment stood for.

Humboldt's Ideen embodied his personal convictions and all that he believed was necessary to restore the whole man. Mirabeau's Sur l'Education Publique [1791] was known to Humboldt and had given him the inspiration for his own work. He thought that reform of the individual would bring about reform of the state by peaceful means, since it had been proved that force and destruction would not achieve these ends.

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WILHELM VON HUMBOLDT'S IDEA OF BILDUNG AND EDUCATION

When Wilhelm von Humboldt was born in 1767, Rousseau's concept of education and his revolutionary ideas, expounded in his books Joulie, ou la Nouvelle Heloise and Emile were opposed to the old established doctrines, calling for the condemnation of the orthodox and all ideas of moral constraint.

Campe, Humboldt's tutor and friend, among others in Germany paid homage to Rousseau, but also instilled in his pupil an everlasting love and admiration for ancient Greek culture.

Humboldt's important work Ideen, finished in May 1792, developed from a correspondence of controversial political arguments with his friend, Friedrich Gentz, in Berlin, in the year 1791. In these letters he consolidated his thoughts, which had been instigated by the French Revolution and the prevailing conditions of his time. Humboldt's friend Brinkmann published part of this correspondence in the January edition of the Biestersche Monatsschrift in 1792, calling it: "Ideen über die Staatsverfassung durch die neue französische Konstitution veranlasst". Humboldt's further additions to the Ideen of 1791 to 1792 were only partly published in Schiller's Neue Thalia in November 1792, under yet another title: "Wie weit darf sich die Sorgfalt des Staates auf seine Bürger erstrecken".

Many parts were revised and re-written and only published posthumously in 1852 by Wilhelm's younger brother, Alexander von Humboldt, under the title as it is known today: Ideen zu einem Versuch die Grenzen der Wirksamkeit des Staates zu bestimmen.

The question arises as to why it was not published in its entirety in his lifetime. He not only had difficulty in finding a publisher, but the ideas which he expounded in it were revolutionary in their context and in contradiction to the events and opinions of the day.

Wilhelm von Humboldt was a man of action rather than words. After his father died, he became very much withdrawn and developed at an early age--as he revealed in his autobiography [1816]--a taste for ancient Greek literature, and began to exercise self-control simply because he thought that it was virtuous. Both of Humboldt's tutors, Campe as well as Knuth, taught their pupils Wilhelm and Alexander in a rather old-fashioned, pedantic way, but did not fail to instill the love for Greece--in the tradition of Winckelmann--in their pupils. The notion of stoical self-respect and inner freedom was the essence, and one of the central ideas, of the Age of Enlightenment. When Humboldt was only twelve, he acquired a love for history, literature and science and spoke Greek, Latin and French. His tutor, Knuth, prepared the young gentleman in law and philosophy, in order to meet the requirements for entry to the university at Frankfurt an der Oder in 1787. Humboldt, however, continued to study law at Göttingen, where he met the philologist Heyne, who among others, such as Foster,

Jacobi and August Wilhelm Schlegel, remained a lifelong friend. In Göttingen, Humboldt studied Kant's work intensively.

In 1789, accompanied by his tutor and friend Campe, he visited Paris to witness the first stages of the French Revolution. On his return, he wrote a first hand report from his notes. His reflections on his experience induced the following quotation: "Wann wird der Mann aufstehen, der für die Gesetzgebung ist was Rousseau für die Erziehung."¹ While in Paris, he also made himself familiar with the conditions at the hospital Hotel Dieu.

From Paris, he went to Erfurt, where he became engaged to his future wife Caroline von Dacheroden, whom he had met through the Veredlungsbund, a club for culture and self-improvement founded by Henriette Herz. During this time, he visited Goethe for the first time; he had already met Schiller through his friendship with the sisters von Lengefeld.

In the January of 1790, Humboldt returned to Berlin to start his legal profession as a Referendar at the Kammergericht. Having found administration geistlos, he resigned in 1791 and moved to the estates of his wife, devoting his time to writing and cultivating friendships. During this time, his work, Ideen, materialized. The study of ancient Greek, which he continued, opened his mind to a humanistic view of life, deepened by his friendship with the philologist Friedrich August Wolf, who lectured in Halle, and with whom he studied and translated works by Homer, Pindar and Herodotus.

Humboldt's work Ideen was followed by Theorie der Bildung des Menschen [1793] , and Über das Studium des Altertums und des griechischen insbesondere, for which Schiller wrote an introduction.

In 1794, he moved to Jena with his wife in order to be near Schiller, with whom he had developed a deep friendship and who, in particular, had been very interested in Humboldt's work from the start. The next essay of Humboldt's, "Plan einer Vergleichenden Anthropologie" [1795] was published in Schiller's Horen, in which he compared the difference between the physical and mental ability of the sexes. His anthropological theory was divided in two essays, "Abhandlung über den Geschlechtsunterschied und dessen Einfluss auf die organische Natur", and "Abhandlung über die männliche und weibliche Form", because he thought that physical form was related to mental ability.

In 1795, Humboldt had to leave Jena for Berlin on account of his mother's illness. His next task was to help in getting Schiller's Musen Almanach published. He continued studying and writing and produced in 1797, Über den Geist der Menschheit, and in the same year, Das achtzehnte Jahrhundert. He travelled extensively after his mother's death, and went to Paris. While there he paid tribute to Goethe in an essay, "Über Goethes Hermann und Dorothea", in April 1798.

In the year 1799, the Humboldts undertook an extensive trip to Spain which lasted almost a year. Humboldt was very interested in the language and culture of the country, and started to compile information on comparative linguistics, a study which he continued to the end of his life. He accumulated more material from the libraries in Paris

on his way home in April 1800. Among other things, he studied the Basque language, which is not derived from Indo-Germanic roots, unlike the rest of the European languages. His continuing correspondence with Goethe gives a remarkable insight of his observations on people. This letter is dated from Madrid, 23 November 1799:

Je später sich eine Nation ausbildet, desto unübersteiglicher dünkt mich diese Scheidewand.

[Meaning between the people and the educated classes.] Sie existiert kaum in Spanien, weil die

Bildung dort ihren Gipfel fast im 16. Jahrhunderte erreicht hatte; sie ist geringer in Frankreich,

... auch dort die feinere Bildung schon alt ist,

sie ist unendlich gross in Deutschland; bei uns

ist in der Tat eine intellektuelle Aristokratie,

wenn nicht zur Kaste gehört, kann auch selbst un-
gere leichtesten Schriftsteller kaum verstehen.

[The reason for that is] Die Bildung in diesen letzten Zeiten ist schnell, sie ist vorzüglich philosophisch gewesen.... In den frühern Zeiten

war sie langsamer und sinnlicher, das Volk konnte damals nachkommen; jetzt eilt man ihm ohne alle

Hoffnung der Möglichkeit des Einholens voraus....

Gerade was hätte dazubeitragen sollen, die Wissenschaften populär zu machen, hat die entgegengesetzte Wirkung gehabt. Sonst schrieb man, was

schwerer war lateinisch, und was man in der Muttersprache schrieb, machte man auch für das

Volk verständlich. Jetzt fällt diese letztere Bemühung fast ganz hinweg.²

The existing schools at the end of the eighteenth century consisted of Church- --Latein- and Garnisons- --and Armenschulen. In the Garnisonschulen, children of officers and others connected with the army were educated, and it was in one of these that Schiller received his education. The Garnisons- and Armenschulen had existed since 1692. Frederick the Great (1740-86) had established the Ritterakademien in Brandenburg in 1765. These were based on the Collegium illustre establishment in Tübingen, which flourished from the seventeenth to the eighteenth century, and were aimed at producing the galant homme, the man of affairs and diplomacy, the civil servant and courtier. Hecker erected the first Realschule in Berlin in 1748, whose curriculum did not contain Greek or Latin but instead compensated with technical subjects such as physics, technology and statistics. This was in contrast to the existing Lateinschulen.

After the Seven Years' War, Frederick the Great restored the Berlin Akademie to foster literature and learning. He engaged French savants as lecturers, among others D'Argens as head of the philosophy department. This was due to the fact that he had no faith in the German language, which he regarded as fit only for barbarians. Frederick, also called "the enlightened ruler", had proclaimed freedom of conscience and proved his good intentions by giving freedom to Christian Wolff, who had been exiled by his father. He also allowed into Brandenburg refugees and other immigrants persecuted for their religious beliefs. He sent his architect, Knobelsdorff, abroad to gather experience and

new ideas. It is said that he personally supervised the building of the first china factory in Brandenburg, and enriched the cultural life, including the arts, particularly music, by setting aside large sums for this purpose.

The absolute state had shown its determination to become a cultural state. Frederick envisaged Prussia as a geistige Gewalt more than a political power. The old "Latin-schools" had lost their meaning and were converted into "Burgherschools", because out of all the subjects that were taught there, the emphasis was on "geisttötende Grammatikstunden und Katechismusunterricht." Ritterakademien and Paedagogien were the institutions in which the aristocracy were brought up and educated, but they did not prepare their students for university, and were therefore in dire need of reform. Education through the centuries had been affected by social as well as historical events, and in no time were changes greater than in the Age of Enlightenment. Humboldt reveals his thoughts and ideas to Forster, a friend from his student days in Göttingen: "dass nichts auf Erden so wichtig ist, als die höchste Kraft und die vielseitige Bildung der Individuen, und dass daher der wahren Moral erstes Gesetz ist; bilde Dich selbst, und nur ihr zweites; wirke auf Andere durch das was Du bist-- diese Maximen sind mir eigen, als dass ich mich von ihnen trennen könnte."³

Herder, who was teaching in a cathedral school in Riga, had similar ideas to those of Humboldt which he expounded in Journal meiner Reise [1769]. Herder was influenced by Rousseau and his teacher Hamann, and echoed their views in his fourth Kritische Wälder; he wanted to do away with grammar, convention and compulsion in education. He sets

out his ideas for his school in Riga in his Reisejournal. The new school plan which he envisages was to include modern studies and physical culture, and be conducted in the pupils' native German; French was also of major importance, although he was angry with himself for having never mastered the fundamental rules of it. French was to be followed by other modern languages, usually Italian or Spanish and then English. Latin was relegated to a minor place, while much prominence was given to mathematics, science and history. Humboldt considered religion as the strongest bulwark of morality, although religion and the Bible as such were the object of great arguments and had been abandoned by many for the sake of philosophy. Herder never mentioned them in his reform plan.

Wilhelm II, the successor of Frederick the Great, carried on with these reforms and allowed money for the development of schools and academies. He furthermore declared Lutheranism as the state religion, even threatening penalties for those who did not conform, although he did not interfere with his immigrants and their denominations. The promotion of religion by laws and state institutions was still favoured amongst the general public.

In 1783, in Halle, Humboldt's friend Wolf organized a pedagogical seminary for the training of teachers, which was founded on the principles of the philanthropists; solid pedagogical training had already been advocated by Basedow earlier on. Humboldt and other educators advised that the Abitur should serve as a standard for having reached maturity.

Stephanis' Grundriss der Staatserziehungswissenschaft of 1797 had been enlarged in 1804 and given a new title, System der öffentlichen Erziehung, which became, together with Zöllner's Ideen über Nationalerziehung, the standard work for educational reforms.

Humboldt was not an elitist and was always striving for perfection, continuing the ideas of the educationalists and his own ideas in the Litauer and Königsberger school curriculum.

Horst Siebert brings out Humboldt's personality in these words: "Nur wer den Menschen in seiner Individualität erkennt, kann ihn bilden, nur wer sich selbst erkennt kann sich bilden."

Humboldt visualized transformation of the individual through education and consequently change of government. But Humboldt's idea of Humanität through self-cultivation and realisation is open-ended, because he realised that the most precious of human gifts were threatened by social and technical development, and the alienation among men. Though education was the key concept of Humboldt's political theory, for him it meant essentially the modification of our sensibility through culture and experience. Up to now, education had been mainly under the jurisdiction of the state and church. The term "education" has been defined by many scholars, but its meaning nowadays embraces a much wider concept than in his time. "Education" could be defined as a development of character and mental powers, resulting from systematic instruction.

The Age of Enlightenment had brought about many changes, and likewise the Industrial Revolution new inventions and explorations into the world of science and philosophy.

This had a tremendous impact on the ordinary man and his way of life.

After his return to Berlin from Spain, Humboldt began to get restless again, and since the post of Prussian envoy to the Papal court had become vacant, he took the opportunity to apply, and was given the post. In 1802, Humboldt and his family set out for Rome; his reports to Berlin were proof of the conscientiousness with which he exercised his diplomatic mission.

His house at the Spanish Steps became a meeting-place for the famous people of his day, who included among others Lucien Bonaparte, brother of Napoleon, Chateaubriand, Madame de Stael and others. While in Rome, he was promoted to Geheimer Legationsrat und preussischen Residenten in Rome, and while there he wrote Latium and Hellas oder Betrachtungen über das Klassische Altertum [1806], verifying once more his devotion to everything Greek.

His family remained in Rome while he went for a short while to Spain in order to continue his study of linguistics.

When Humboldt had returned from Rome to his estate in 1808, after the Napoleonic Wars, he was offered a post in the ministry under Freiherr vom Stein. He hesitated, but later consented, and the title of Geheimer Staatsrat und Direktor der Sektion des Kultus und öffentlichen Unterrichts im preussischen Ministerium des Innern was conferred on him in February 1809. His family still remained in Rome, but he himself moved from Berlin to Königsberg on a special mission to help to reform the educational system there. His twentieth report from Königsberg to the King included proposals for reform and is dated 27 September 1809. In this, he advocated three stages of education,

for which his predecessors Nicolavius and Zeller had done a lot of groundwork, namely firstly, Elementarunterricht, then, Schulunterricht, and finally Universitätsunterricht.

"Der Zweck des Schulunterrichts ist die Übung der Fähigkeiten, und die Erwerbung der Kenntnisse, ohne welche Wissenschaftliche Einsicht und Kunstfertigkeit unmöglich ist, ... der junge Mensch soll in Stand gesetzt werden, den Stoff, an welchen sich alles eigne Schaffen immer anschliessen muss." Humboldt emphasises self-study and research for the student with the help and support of the professor; this should start at an early stage.

Whether the student needs oral instructions depends on the subject. Humboldt envisages many years of study at university, which he calls Lehranstalt, because the old concept, taken over from the Middle Ages, had a different connotation, and Lehranstalt was more to his liking.⁵ At the end of his report, he says: "da die Bestimmung eines Kindes oft sehr lange unentschieden bleibt, so bringen sie den Nachteil hervor, das leicht Verwechselungen vorgehen, der künftige Gelehrte zu lange in 'Mittelschulen', der künftige Handwerker zu lange in 'gelehrte Schulen' verweilt."

Humboldt's ideas of schooling in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century were a great advancement for his time, since education was previously confined to the upper classes. Gelehrte Schulen were the schools which gave working class children a solid foundation, and from there they went into business or apprenticeship. He emphasised that if children changed from one school to another it should be seen that the process of education was continuous.

Humboldt's twenty-fourth report from Königsberg is much more to the point and advocates education for all: "den allgemeinen Schulplan auf die ganze Masse der Nation, und sucht diejenige Entwicklung der menschlichen Kräfte zu befördern, welche allen Ständen gleich nothwendig ist und an welche die zu jeden einzelnen Beruf nöthigen Fertigkeiten und Kenntnisse leicht angeknüpft werden können."⁶

Humboldt envisaged a kind of institution in which every moral man and Burger could be educated, but at the same time he was far-sighted enough not to disregard the limitations of the individual.

The education which he advocated laid the foundation for future occupations and professions. The learning of basic skills and general knowledge were supposed to be the starting point for an all-round education, maintained throughout life. If there was a labour-shortage in one skilled job, then the individual--on account of a basic knowledge--ought to be easily re-trained for another job. Jobs ought to be selected according to natural inclinations and abilities of the individual. The difficulty, he stressed, would arise when young people were unable to decide at an early age on a future career, and certain problems would have to be faced with late developers, therefore the special- and secondary-schools ought to be carefully selected after the elementary foundation was laid. Furthermore, he recommended specialized schools for craftsmen, businessmen and artists, and care should be taken that they were kept as such.

Humboldt's realistic approach to social conditions was revealed when he proposed that pupils of richer parents

ought to contribute to the school fees of those who were unable to pay.

The report contained in the Königsberger and Litauer school reform plan was discovered and published by Spranger at the beginning of this century.

Zeller, a colleague of Humboldt, who had already started some reform in Königsberg, had drawn up a schoolplan on which Humboldt approved because his method of teaching, and his principles, were in the spirit of Pestalozzi.[#] Humboldt, in his report to the King, recommended Zeller's schoolplan, which he had studied, and thought that, once tested, ought to be circulated to all schools in the country. The orphanage in which Zeller's curriculum was implemented was called Das Zeller'sche Normal-Institut. He felt that Erziehung and Unterricht should go together; by giving the children rights as well as duties they would get used to order, strictness and justice. The older children were expected to care and look after the younger ones. Humboldt recommended for a general curriculum the following subjects: gymnastics, music, painting, mathematics, and religion, particularly stressing the learning of the ten commandments and principles of ethics.

Humboldt further suggested in his twenty-fourth report that the Normal-Institut ought to serve as a model school, where teachers could come together and learn Zeller's method of teaching, and also that teachers should only be engaged if they were capable, otherwise they should take up a different profession. Examinations should establish the competence of teachers in general.

He furthermore thought that entrance examinations to university should be made compulsory and that only mature

people should be admitted. He not only considered ordinary schools and institutes but also specialized ones for the blind, deaf and dumb. The ideas which he proposed for the reform of the academies were drawn up by Humboldt's brother, Alexander, before leaving Berlin, and a school-commission was set up to examine his recommendations.

In 1810, Humboldt was living in Berlin and together with other members of the Cabinet was engaged in reforming the Gymnasium into two streams, known as neu-humanistisch and wissenschaftlich.

Together with Süvers and Schleiermacher, he founded Berlin University, and in the same year, 1810, he wrote an important document in connection with it: Über die innere und äussere Organisation der höheren Wissenschaftlichen Anstalten in Berlin.

Humboldt had quite definite ideas about how he envisaged the process of learning for students, and in his document about the University, he states:

Ihr Weg, dahin zu gelangen, ist einfach und sicher. Sie muss nur auf eine harmonische Ausbildung aller Fähigkeiten in ihren Zöglingen sinnen; nur seine Kraft in einer möglichst geringen Anzahl von Gegenständen an, so viel möglich, allen Seiten üben, und alle Kenntnisse dem Gemüth nur so einpflanzen, dass das Verstehen Wissen und geistige Schaffen, nicht durch äussere Umstände, sondern durch innere Präcision, Harmonie und Schönheit Reiz gewinnt.

He recommended that the student should concentrate on a few subjects only, and he also recommended that in order

to safeguard the academy as well as the university, an amalgamation should take place between them. Academies ought to be self-governing, with the King in the capacity of patron only. Academies, universities and affiliated institutes should be independent, but, academically, an integrated whole, and the government should only act in a supervisory capacity.

Berlin University was unique in many ways, expressing its academic freedom by allowing its students to change to other universities during their course of study, and the informal Seminar was voted as the best means of study, abandoning the conventional lectures. In 1810, the examination for teachers was made compulsory.

In the June of the same year, Humboldt was made Preussischer Gesandter in Wien. He subsequently attended the Congress of Prague from 1813 to 1814 as a Prussian plenipotentiary and moved on from there to Vienna. At the end of the Napoleonic Wars, he took part in the peace treaty in Paris. In 1815, he went with Hardenberg to attend the Congress of Vienna. While in his capacity as an ambassador, he wrote Über die Bedingungen unter denen Wissenschaft und Kunst in einem Volke gedeihen [1814].

From 1817 to 1818, Humboldt was Preussischer Gesandter in London. Throughout his life, his services to society were always divided between his official duties and his intellectual preoccupations. His friendship with Schiller and Goethe flourished, and their correspondence amounted to several volumes. His interest in historical affairs led him to write in 1818 his essay, "Betrachtungen über die bewegenden Ursachen in der Weltgeschichte".

In 1819, he was made a member of the Council of State and State Affairs, and at the end of the same year gave up these posts in order to devote his time to writing.

The outcome of his studies in linguistics was his most important work, written in 1820 and still recognized and highly acclaimed today by Chomsky and others: Über vergleichende Sprachstudien in Beziehung auf die verschiedenen Epochen der Sprachentwicklung. This dissertation was read by Humboldt before the Berlin Academy of Science in June, 1820; the inspiration for his linguistic studies came from August Wilhelm and Friedrich Schlegel.

In Humboldt's later years, he mainly occupied himself with the study of Sanskrit and Indian philosophy, which led him to adopt a theosophical outlook on life in his retirement from ministerial duties.

He emphasized that: "Der Mensch ist nur Mensch durch die Sprache, um die Sprache zu erfinden, musste er schon Mensch sein, und Sprache ist kein Werk [ergon], sondern eine Tätigkeit [energeia], kein totes Erzeugtes, sondern weit mehr eine Erzeugung."⁸

He saw in language not only a means of communication, but also the expression of "self". The best translation of the term Erzeugung which Humboldt uses is "generative process", a term which is well established in logic and which is also well established in the tradition of linguistic theory.

Humboldt stands in the cross current of rationalist and romanticist thought, and his work on languages is the culmination of human development, considering speech as

an instrument of thought and self-expression. Chomsky paid tribute to Humboldt:

These formulations--referring to his linguistic studies--are typical of Cartesian linguistics and romantic philosophy of language and aesthetic theory. For Humboldt, the only true definition of language is "eine genetische; sie ist nämlich die sich ewig wiederholende Arbeit des Geistes, den articulierten Laut zum Ausdruck des Gedankens fähig zu machen." There is a constant and uniform factor underlying this Arbeit des Geistes; it is what Humboldt called the Form of language. The concept of Form includes the Regeln der Redeführung as well as the rules of Wortbildung ... Language is furthermore referred to as ... "ein inneres Ganzes des Gedankenzusammenhanges und der Empfindung."⁹

The development of Humboldt's notion form of language must be considered against the background of the intensive discussion during the Romantic period of the distinction between "mechanical" and "organic" form. August Wilhelm Schlegel writes about the selfsame subject in his work Sprache und Poetik [1795].¹⁰ Finally, Herder and his contribution to language must be mentioned; in 1772, he wrote Abhandlung über den Ursprung der Sprache. In this work, he is in agreement with Leibniz--a claim first made in Fragmente--that thought process and language exist interdependent of one another: "Die menschliche Seele denkt in

Worten. Ordnet ihre Gedanken mittels der Sprache. Sprache sagt Leibniz ist der Spiegel des menschlichen Verstandes, unentbehrliches Werkzeug seiner Vernunft. Mittelst der Sprache lernen wir denken."

The Cartesian linguists have traced their development from Descartes to Humboldt; their approach to linguistics is a dual one, just as is that of Humboldt, who contributed to the understanding of languages, not only from a theoretical, but also from a practical point of view. Leibniz also makes it explicit in his work that we cannot be taught anything unless the basic foundations are present. But in order to prove that not all comes from within, the Wild Boy of Aveyron can be given as an example. He was discovered in the woods and in the rivers by farmers in central France in 1799. Victor, as he was called, was the living refutation of Rousseau's "noble savage", regarded by some as retarded and mutè. He had spent years in isolation, and without human contact. The French doctor, Itard, who undertook his education, used the same method as for the teaching of deaf and mentally retarded children. Marlan Lane found the lost documents of Dr Itard, in which he had laid down his observations, and why he had treated Victor in the way he had done.

All this shed new light on many unanswered questions with regard to human activities, social contact and instructions. Is there a critical period in which to acquire a language? To what extent can education compensate for late

development? What are the features of effective training methods in learning a language?

Descartes' and Humboldt's idea about the acquisition of language is traced back to Plato: "Sprache lässt sich ... nicht eigentlich lehren, sondern nur im Gemüthe wecken." Descartes is reverting to Platonism, emphasizing the mind's direct knowledge of itself. Language is a specific human ability, independent of intelligence, stressing the creative and the mechanical principle involved. We can furthermore make a distinction between the ideas principally expressed by a linguistic form and the accessory ideas associated with it.

According to Humboldt's plan, language learning was supposed to be given priority not for the sake of learning, but for discipline, training of the mind and general knowledge.

There were other sources--besides the Rousseauist and Sturm und Drang cult of feeling--that influenced Humboldt. In Germany, the ideas of Rousseau collided with the ideas of Leibniz, Shaftesbury and Burke, which brought about a whole trail of transformations which changed the outlook of generations to come. The Bildungsideal of the Neo-Humanists like Pestalozzi, Froebel and others were identical with Rousseau's. Gessner and Ernesti, in conjunction with the Dutch Rollin and Holländer, laid the foundation for a positive and scientific Neo-Humanism in Europe, putting into practice the combined educational ideas of Rousseau and Pestalozzi.

Gessner fulfilled his educational task at the Thomasschule in Leipzig, Heyne at the Gymnasium in Hannover, and Ilfeld in Göttingen. The Philantropin in Dessau, an experimental school of the German Enlightenment, was founded by Basedow, a friend of Goethe, in 1774. Here, children were educated the "natural way", as Rousseau and Pestalozzi advocated, in the principles of philanthropy, natural religion and so on. Basedow had gained the support of the enlightened princes for a rational system of education which should not neglect physical training and instruction in the mother tongue. He introduced into the curriculum pictures, models, samples, tools and conversation classes. He thought that six hours of study and two of manual labour each day were to the best advantage of the children.

In this connection, one has to point out how much the philanthropists have done for reform in general. Free development for children and religious instruction should be in accordance with the Age of Enlightenment. They supported the supervision of schools by the state rather than by the religious authorities. They also advocated and supported the erection of Industrie- and Berufsschulen. Their main representative, J.H. Campe, Humboldt's former tutor, wrote on educational reform, between 1785 and 1792, Allgemeine Revision des gesamten Schul- und Erziehungswesen, and in 1801, Wörterbuch zur Erklärung und Verdeutschung der unserer Sprache aufgedrungenen fremden Ausdrücke.

The Neo-Humanists included men like F.A. Wolf, Schiller, Süvern, Schleiermacher and Bernhard. Spranger's theory

is that Humboldt's Humanitätsidee was part of his idea of Bildung, and based on Kant's Ethics. Ethics are the foundation of Kant's work, whereby pure reason does not mean ethical reason as such, but independent reason, that is, reason or knowledge which is independent of our senses, but which resides in our intellect. Kant maintains that our knowledge does not all come through our senses, for our senses are but imperfect measures of reality. When all the material assistance of experience is taken away, then we can employ our intellect--that is, our reason--not merely as a receiver of impressions but as a creator of ideas.

This is where Humboldt has an affinity with Kant regarding his idea of Bildung as expressed in self-cultivation and self-realization. In its essence, it meant to Humboldt the development of those faculties in us that characterize our Humanität.

The idea of self-realization came to Humboldt by studying the Greeks. He seemed to have regarded Greek culture more as part of the humanistic curriculum than as an absolute value. Basically, he was a true believer in a Hellenistic ideal, both from the aesthetic and ethical point of view. His own temperament was far from classical in the way he stressed longing and the creative value of loneliness and self-awareness, and this gave him a rather romantic outlook. Humboldt placed the concept of the classical ideal at the very centre of the Prussian Humanistic Gymnasium, and this

was later on adopted by the rest of Germany. Winckelmann's idea of Greece had been implanted in him, which created the Greek ideal from imagination, not from historical facts. He knew that it was an illusion, but did not change his view for the sake of self-cultivation. Striving for this ideal of sich bilden was a priority for him because he thought that the development of the individual would contribute to the happiness of society as a whole, and make it a better place in which to live. This could only be achieved in collaboration with others. Humboldt's aim was that it was not enough merely to be a human being; one should be a gebildeter Mensch.

This concept was expressed in his Ideen, where he compared the growth of a human being with a seed: "die Form wird wiederum gleichsam Materie einer schöneren Form ... was der Mensch von aussen empfängt, ist nur Samenkorn."¹¹ What Man perceives in abundance from the outer world, and how it develops within, depends on his own nature. This concept, which Humboldt designated Kräfte, was termed Monads by Leibniz, and Seele by Herder. "Wieviel ähnlicher aber noch muss die Wirkung der Ursache dasein, wo der Mensch nicht bloss empfindet und äussere Eindrücke auffasst, sondern selbst tätig wird."¹²

Humboldt was not detached from practical problems, but he also tells us how to achieve these stages of self-awareness and self-realization, namely through art; he emphasizes the beautiful as a source of cultivating aesthetic awareness, and he is here following in the footsteps of the Stoics, who defined "beauty" as moral goodness.

Stressing art as a system of cognition, it was in this sense that they considered moral virtue as an art of living.

Humboldt discards the thought that the aesthetic condition would only be a transition to moral perfection in human development, and instead sees the aesthetic, not as a means to an end, but as an end in itself, an ultimate goal; being unaware of aesthetic qualities in an object would prove Man to be lacking in a characteristically human kind of awareness.

He thinks that all this is part of Bildung, and unites men into a harmonious whole: "Das Studium des Schönen gewährt Geschmack, des Erhabenen--wenn es auch hier für ein Studium gibt, und nicht Gefühl und Darstellung des Erhabenen allein Frucht des Genies ist--richtig abgewogene Grösse. ... vereint alle Töne des wohlgestimmten Wesens in eine reizende Harmonie."¹³

In order to achieve this self-cultivation, Humboldt's firm conviction was that the most important factor which Man needs in order to develop is freedom. In his Ideen, he expresses his views against the oppressions of the government in office, which were imposed upon the individual. He thought that free development of Man within the state should be given priority.

Haym, an authority on Humboldt, confirms his ideas that art and aesthetic education of the individual should be part of Bildung: "Das aesthetische Schema wurde an Stelle des moralischen zum alleinigen und allgemeinen erhoben; die Kunst für das einzige, wahre Organon und Dokument der Philosophie erklärt, und das ganze Universum unter die Formel

der absoluten Indifferenz des Subjektiven und Objectiven gestellt."¹⁴

Kant's philosophy, the philosophy of subjectivism, is freedom in its highest form. Subject and object should not be seen as a duality, but as a harmonious whole, which Man is able to achieve through the aesthetic state alone.

Humboldt, like Schiller in Über Anmut und Würde [1793] associated Bildung with dignity: "Ist aber die Anmut nur ein Vorrecht der Menschenbildung."¹⁵ If neither dignity nor grace are present as part of human development, Man is on the level of the animals, and the first indispensable condition to achieve these qualities--as expounded in Anmut und Würde--is freedom within a suitable environment to develop all potentials without interference from the government, and without losing one's identity in the process.

When Humboldt talks about Eigentümlichkeit der Kräfte, he not only means preserving, but also unfolding, our potentials within the community in harmony with our fellow men. If the uniqueness of the individual and his presumed freedom collide with the necessary direction of development of the objective, i.e. non-self reality, Man is destroyed (see Werther), if, however, they coincide--achieve an equilibrium--it is possible to maintain his particular way of being. Eigentümlichkeit can only be preserved by Ein-fühlung of the particular into the whole. Each person ought to develop his powers to the fullest within a free society, and the release of these powers would bring about a truly free being.

Freedom was one of Schiller's central ideas in his work; this he set out in his treatise Über die Ästhetische Erziehung des Menschen of 1795, in which Humboldt had inspired him. He believes that freedom is essential for the shaping of imagination, in Man's capacity as a human being, and associates it with the arts, and, in this concept, with aesthetics. Humboldt's ideals of universality and individuality cannot be envisaged without freedom.

In the process of Bildung and education, Man changes from one stage of development to the next, a never-ending chain of transformations. Man should learn to condition and adapt his mind to new principles, thereby producing new results. The undisciplined mind will, like an unbroken horse, try to throw off every attempt at restraint, and Humboldt firmly believed that Bildung ought to be part of education, and not be divorced from aesthetic concepts. He thought that we develop aesthetic appreciation by cultivating an interest in the arts, and also that as human beings we can only develop by being in contact with others.

Kant thought that aesthetic experiences emanated from our imagination, and in his Kritik der Urteilskraft [1790] he expounded that an aesthetic judgement of beauty and the beautiful in nature and in art involves, and refers to, the subject. He always thinks that Zweckmässigkeit, that which has a purpose, and our perception of it, is due to our subjective judgement. As an example of this can be given the beauty of a rock crystal, which can be seen as an object of aesthetic appreciation without its beauty having any purpose, being present purely through Nature for its own sake.

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When one contemplates a work of art, one cannot exclude the belief in a master-mind behind it, which moulded the forms of nature. Since we cannot see the branches of a tree in isolation, but only with reference to the idea of the tree as a whole, every part only exists by means of the other parts within the whole. Therefore, development of a human being cannot be seen in isolation.

For Humboldt, as well as for Schiller, moral perfection of man lay in the synthesis of the sensuous and the rational in the aesthetic. This aesthetic idealism was firmly fixed in Humboldt's mind before going to Rome; however, it matured still further--according to Kaym--whilst he was actually there.

Ritter, in his biography of Stein [1958], puts Humboldt on the same level as Kant, saying that Kant called Humboldt "ein grosser Geist."

Man, according to Humboldt, is first and foremost an aesthetic being, and Man's moral perfection lies in the aesthetic sphere. He elucidates how, and in what way, we can perfect our aesthetic awareness in his Ideen, and groups it in his chapter entitled "Sittenverbesserung": "Die schönen Künste bringen eine doppelte Wirkung hervor ... sie geben unmittelbar Ideen oder regen die Empfindung auf, stimmen den Ton der Seele ... bereichern oder erhöhen mehr ihre Kraft."¹⁶ We all have by nature an inbuilt appreciation of beauty to a greater or lesser degree.

Humboldt compares the sculptural art of the Borghese Gladiator and the painting of the Madonna by Guido Reni

with poetry, which creates in his mind a mental image that lasts even longer than a fleeting glance at a statue or painting. Poetry is, to his mind, the most perfect of the arts, thereby agreeing with Lessing's idea of poetry and painting as expressed in his Laocoon.

The aesthetic feeling is seen as the living principle of the world of sense being an opposing force towards cold reason by Humboldt in his Ideen: "Was am meisten blosses Werk der kalten Vernunft scheint, so macht es die Idee des Erhabenen allein möglich, dem unbedingt gebietenden Gesetze zwar allerdings durch das Medium des Gefühls, auf eine menschliche, und doch, durch den völligen Mangel der Rücksicht auf Glückseligkeit oder Unglück auf eine göttlich uneigennützige Weise zu gehorchen. Das Gefühl der Unangemessenheit der menschlichen Kräfte zum moralischen Gesetz."¹⁷

Because Humboldt thought that the moral code was the basis for Bildung and education, the latter should not be under state control, as this lay wholly outside the limits of the legitimate activity of the state.

Humboldt believes that the idea of the sublime alone enables us to obey the unconditional law of morals embodied in all works of nature and art that surround us, and that the sublime should bring us nearer to the divine. Hume's work must have been known to Humboldt, as he expresses the same thing in identical words, namely, that the aesthetic sense in Man is part of his original nature and corresponds to stimuli provided by natural beauty or by works of art.

If our feeling of inadequacy regarding obedience to the moral law is at an ebb, it would be uplifted and strengthened by beauty as a source of moral equilibrium. As a corruption of morals, Humboldt quotes the legal constitution and the state institutions.

Man can only arrive at the middle path of wisdom and virtue through errors and failures. Sensualism is regarded by Humboldt as a source of physical and moral evil. Development of character and morals is, then, through the beautiful.

Humboldt, like Lotze, retained the conception that the universe is under moral government, but he saw that this government effects the full development of the individual, and that is open to serious objections. How can it be reconciled with divine justice, that some men remain ill-developed relatively to those of a later period? If it be affirmed that history is the education of humanity, it must be objected that education is only intelligible to us when a single individual is concerned, when it is one and the same person who becomes better, who bears the penalties of his mistakes.¹⁸

Plato's view was that education enables men and women to see things in their right proportion, to "see things whole." Where such knowledge and will to determine the social structure is lacking, the structure can only be determined by historical circumstances; individual persons

would then be the victims of a social structure, not its architects, and their education would have to be judged not as an end in itself--as part of achieving a good life--but as a means used by others for the achievement of their ends.

Universal education under the control, and with the support, of the state was already strongly urged by Luther. The first compulsory attendance law was passed in Weimar in 1619, followed, in 1642, by Gotha. Compulsory attendance did not become firmly established, however, until it was made a requirement in Prussia in 1717, and again in 1763, and spread from there to other states. In England, the first compulsory attendance law was passed in 1876, after schools had already been provided under the law of 1870. Nowhere were laws well enforced except in Germany, and it was found necessary either to adopt certain standards of attainment for exemption before the age of fourteen, or to supplement attendance laws by child labour laws.

Humboldt thought that the state would only improve when members of the community strove first and foremost to realize their individual potentials. Thereafter, it should be the purpose of education to enable them to see their own personal problems and aspirations in relation to those of their society. The acquisition of mental and physical skills would permit them to pursue those personal and social ends efficiently.

Humboldt believed that all human knowledge was based on experience, and that this experience is the material

for the concept on which Kant built his reason. An ancient philosopher once remarked, "The eye without the mind is blind", therefore we must try to understand the real world, not through our perceptions but through our conceptions, not through the impressions gained through the senses but through our intellect.

If there is one absolute reality in this world it was for Humboldt--as well as for Kant--reality founded on moral principles and the ethical obligation preached by Kant. On this ethical obligation, Humboldt had based his theory of Bildung as well as that of education in the widest sense. This was an accepted fact by the philosophes of the Age of Enlightenment. Montesquieu had devoted a whole book of his De l'Esprit des Loix to education.

Bildung had, in the widest sense, for Humboldt the same significance as the categorical imperative had for Kant. Leibniz's theory of monadology, whereby we develop only according to our innate potentials, was thought by von Rantzen to be more related to Humboldt's theory. Spranger pointed out in this connection that "Die platonisch-aristotelische Lehre von den Dingen einwohnenden geistigen Form, nach der sie sich gestalten wachte neu auf."¹⁹ Education was more than a theory or a hope for the philosophes of the eighteenth century; it was also an experience, and this lies at the centre of their endeavour as men. Their objective was experience in the sense of dialectical struggle, and classical thought in contrast to Christian doctrines.

Humboldt, as well as Kant, realized that the sensuous precedes the intellectual, and that if Man is not in control of it, it will be detrimental to him. Kant believed that human passions were the greatest enemy of Man. Lesley-Smith implies in his book of the same title that Intelligence came First; however, views on this differ. Humboldt believed that the state was responsible for promoting facilities by which the mind and body could be developed in the fullest sense. In accepting the individual as the focus of human endeavour, he was apposing old-established ideas which were not in line with the policies of Enlightenment, and were up to then judged by uniform standards set up by church and state, subordinating human nature to rules and regulations. That is the reason why men like Lessing and Schiller, in particular, protested against the oppression of human nature, and did not hesitate to express their conviction in their works. Freedom was precarious everywhere, and in all the countries in Europe, even in England, writing was subjected to a certain degree of censorship.

Man was seen as an end in himself, and not as a means to an end. State and society underwent great transformations. The true aspect of the Bible was examined, and the philosophes, from Descartes onwards, questioned the existence of God, who was for Newton an active being, who governed all things as a powerful Agent.

In Lessing's Gymnasium in Meissen, prayer and the study of religion preceded that of Latin and Greek.

The rediscovery and awareness of the Self, within the concept of eighteenth-century philosophy, was the highest achievement since the Renaissance.

Humboldt, although not a religious man himself, nevertheless thought that religion was a means of forming and shaping people's character, and would have a moral implication on their thoughts and actions. Therefore, Kant, in his second examination of practical reason, Die Kritik der praktischen Vernunft [1788] thought that the ordinary man needed something to uplift him and recreated God for the people, and also for old Lampe, his servant, so that he could die peacefully. God was, for him, an act of faith.

Humboldt, in a letter to Goethe of 23 August 1804, from Marino in Spain, wrote the following:

Mit grossem Interesse habe ich die Anzeige der pestalozzischen Methode gelesen. Nur finde ich den Rezensenten zu nachsichtig. Sagen Sie mir einmal selbst, was aus dem Menschengeschlecht würde, wenn alle Kinder nun 30 Jahre hintereinander nachbeteten; das Auge liegt unter der Stirn, zweimal zwei ist vier, ein Quadrat hat vier gleiche Seiten usw. Ich fürchte sehr, indem man besonders die Schulen der niedern Stände verbessern will, räumt man als Unrat gerade das mit weg, was allein Heil brachte.

Auch der Bauer und Bettler hat eine Phantasie und ein anderes Gefühl, als das blosse seiner Dürftigkeit und seines kärglichen Genusses, auch in ihm kann und muss etwas Höheres geweckt werden, und bisher wurde es geweckt. Man las in allen Schulen kapitelweise die Bibel.²⁰

Humboldt defended the retention of the Bible unless some really satisfactory substitute could be found. He thought that in previous centuries religion had been the foundation on which state and society were built, that knowledge about science would have taken much longer, had it not been for religion, and that Enlightenment would have been only for a minority. He also thought that the evil in Man and society sprang from Man himself, the individual. Humboldt, however, thought that the cultivation of Man's understanding, as well as of his other faculties, is achieved by his own activity and ingenuity: "Wer nicht bei der Roheit seiner zufälligen Veranlagung stehen bleiben will, muss versuchen, innerhalb seiner Individualität das Ideal anzustreben, er muss seine individuelle Idealität suchen."²¹

Humboldt found his Idealität--like Winckelmann before him--in Greek culture. The Greeks remained his ideal and yardstick throughout his life and were to be implemented into the curriculum of the humanistic Gymnasium.

Humboldt, for himself, rejected Christianity for the sake of Greece. The ideas and ideals of this new Humanism or Neo-Classicism were steeped in everything Greek, and in his view, nothing could be more important for our world than the conception that art should direct us to a freer life, and to a cheerful contemplation of reality and of joyful activity in it. These ideas he contemplated and shared with Schiller from their first meeting, on 24 December 1789.

Humboldt stated in his essay, "Plan einer vergleichenden Anthropologie" [1795] referring to religion: "Sie lehrt die Wahrheit und die Wahrheit ist durchaus objectiv und

allgemein ... am meisten notwendig wenn die doppelte Gefahr eines drückenden Gewissenzwanges oder religiöser Gleichgültigkeit vermieden werden soll."²²

From this, we can deduct that Humboldt was in no way impartial towards religion and saw it--besides morality--as necessary for a foundation for every education; this he also confirmed in his Ideen: "Und überhaupt wird ja niemand den Einfluss der Religion auf die Sittlichkeit ganz ableugnen wollen."²³ Immoral actions, Humboldt believed, sprang from uncontrolled passions, and refining influences should bring Man onto the right path; allusion to the arts, and the beneficial influences of various impressions perceived by the senses have even been recognized by ancient civilisations. Art should appeal to the senses as well as to the mind.

Winckelmann, with his definition of noble simplicity and calm grandeur ("Edle Einfalt und stille Grösse") had restored in Europe the Neo-Classical tradition that art had a refining and moralizing influence. This tradition went back to the Renaissance. Kant enlarged on and supported it in his Kritik der Urteilkraft.

Therefore that which Man perceives through the senses in the way of art and beautiful objects leads him to a new direction in life, and has a humanizing effect upon him.

Humboldt finds affinities with his own ideas in Kant's Kritik der praktischen Vernunft, in which he expresses the view that if one cannot base religion upon science one has to base it upon morals.

Rousseau sets out his ideas of education in five volumes entitled Emile [1762]. He also believed in a natural religion appropriate to the natural education which he made Emile receive, but he only exposes him to the taste of religion when he has already reached eighteen years of age, and is in full command of his "Reason". Rousseau's religious principles are voiced through the Savoyard vicar, and in his essay "Profession de foi", which is an exercise in philosophical theology, in which he expounds the idea of how to make a moral man fit to live in a moral society.

Rousseau believed that education must be natural and that one should trust to nature, and allow the child to grow up free from social influences, its family or other children. Education must be gradual and progressive, in the following way; until the age of eleven there should be education of the senses; from twelve to fifteen, cultivation of intelligence; after fifteen, the fostering of sensitivity or Empfindungsvermögen. He advocated that education must be without restraint and that the child must be spared everything that causes him distress. Education should be joyful and through direct experience, rather than out of books, the only book allowed being Robinson Crusoe. He says that the teacher is responsible for this, and must arrange situations where it is possible.

Pestalozzi had similar ideas but did not believe in the strict and extreme methods used on Rousseau's Emile. He thought that children should be educated in contact with others, and also stressed natural development through activity. He believed that "learning by doing" was the best way of self-realization.

Man was, for Pestalozzi, the "crown of creation", and therefore no work towards achieving these ends was wasted. Reforms were inspired and expanded by Pestalozzi's epoch-making work, done in collaboration with his pupil, the German, Herbart. Their work, like that of the Jesuits in earlier times, humanized and civilized the instruction of the young, sharing in Rousseau's championship of the child but rejecting the unnatural precepts of his *Emile*. Pestalozzi and his school based education upon the five principles of freedom, perfection, rectitude, equity and benevolence. Humboldt had visited him in Switzerland and seen at first hand the result of his work.

Pestalozzi and Keller believed that self-improvement was part and parcel of one's life. Pestalozzi wrote two "folk-books" with educational instruction in mind. In his first one, Lienhard und Gertrud, he is not so much concerned with the story itself, but with human problems. He is concerned, furthermore, to educate those who are unable to pay for their education, and his schools are called Armenschulen. The subject-matter of his story was meant to educate the general public.

Pestalozzi's and Keller's main aim was Menschenbildung, but this was different from Humboldt's because they stressed: "die Familie, 'die Wohnstube', die Urzelle menschlicher Gemeinschaft und das ewige Fundament aller Erziehung."²⁴

Hebel made the sun into a human being: "indem er sie als Mutter der beiden Buben 'Morgenstern' und 'Abendstern' über den Himmel wandern lässt, so sieht Pestalozzi in der

Sonne dem Inbegriff der Schönheit, Grösse, Güte der Natur, das Sinnbild der in Gertrud personifizierten reinen Mütterlichkeit."

Both Pestalozzi and Keller were, unlike Humboldt, in favour of the state and thought that one should be part of it in bad times as well as in good ones. However, both were Swiss nationalists and aware of how much they owed the state at a time when other countries were devastated by war. Keller's Grüner Heinrich found its way, like Goethe's Wilhelm Meister, into the genre of educational novels. Pestalozzi's slogan is that one should be a human being before anything else: "Ich will's, ich kann's, ich soll's."

Fröbel (1782-1852), by his appointment as a professor at Berlin University, guaranteed the future progress of educational theory along the lines laid down by Pestalozzi; indeed, he was the founder of the "kindergarten" system of education, the object of which is to give children employment in harmony with their natural abilities, to strengthen their bodies, to exercise their senses and lead them up to the original foundation of all life, namely, the idea of unity with themselves.

Humboldt compares a perfect human being with a plant, which, after growing from a seed, unfolds into a perfect bloom, but whose full maturity comes only after the flower has died and the fruit has developed.

Goethe expounded his idea of Bildung as part of education in Wilhelm Meister. He had Wilhelm educated amongst people of all classes, in a society in which art played

a great part. Goethe thought that Wilhelm's development of mind and body, a synthesis of the physical and moral being, would achieve realization of the "self". He denoted the process of interrelation between inner and outer factors as Metamorphose in the plant and animal kingdoms, while in the realm of human life he called it Bildung. In essence these terms mean the same thing, although, in Wilhelm Meister, Bildung is complicated by the fact that human beings possess the will to direct their own development and that of others, in order to substitute one aim for another, and to give their development a new direction.

Wilhelm was guided by the invisible church, the Turngesellschaft, and his change of development and self-realization come about when he reads the book Bekenntnisse einer schönen Seele. The Bekenntnisse are a record of Bildung in a religious sense, adding to spiritual and aesthetic perfection. Goethe's positive valuation of error as a stimulus to human development is the central doctrine of Wilhelm Meister's Lehrjahre, no less than in Faust. In the last resort the work is an educational novel--Bildungsroman--in the widest sense, embracing the aspects of natural growth and individual development.

Goethe furthermore expounded his idea of education from a practical point of view in his work "Die pädagogische Provinz", part of Wanderjahre.

In Wilhelm Meister, Goethe, in his maturity, draws nearer to Pestalozzi's idea of Bildung and education, and away from that of Winckelmann. He conveyed in this book how much education depended on outside forces and circumstances. His "Die pädagogische Provinz" was entirely based

on Pestalozzi's Bildungsplan, but it contained less theory and more practice; Goethe had met Pestalozzi in 1775.

Humboldt expressed his realization of human potentials in a letter to Schiller of 13 February 1796, written in connection with his daughter's education: "Die ganze Summe der Erkenntnis (im allerweitesten Verstande) soll dazu dienen, dem Geiste Objekte zu einer Übung und Erhöhung seiner Kräfte zu geben. Einen andern letzten Zweck alles Wissens, Erkennens und Bildens kann ich mir wenigstens nicht denken."²⁵ Goethe and Humboldt both aspired to the same ideal, it being not Bildung as such that they envisaged but an all-round human being.

Since Humboldt was not only a humanist, but also an educationalist, he would have to improve Man's moral standards before achieving his objects:

Ferner erreicht auch die öffentliche Erziehung nicht einmal die Absicht, welche sie sich vorgesetzt, nemlich die Umformung der Sitten nach dem Muster, welches der Staat für das ihm angemessene hält. So wichtig und auf das ganze Leben einwirkend auch der Einfluss der Erziehung sein mag; so sind doch noch immer wichtiger die Umstände, welche den Menschen durch das ganze Leben begleiten. Wo also nicht alles zusammen stimmt, da vermag diese Erziehung allein nicht durchzudringen. Überhaupt soll die Erziehung nur, ohne Rücksicht auf bestimmte, den Menschen zu erteilende bürgerliche Menschen zu bilden; so bedarf es des Staates nicht.²⁶

Humboldt did not want education on a national basis, since he was afraid of uniformity, and of the state imposing its ideas upon the individual. He envisages a state in which an atmosphere is produced in which the personality can be developed. According to him, education can never fulfil its objects when the conditions for it are not suitable, meaning that influences exist which are in contrast with moral principles. Old established ideas, therefore, had to be overcome in order to establish a reform by which everybody could be educated, because he believed that everybody had a right to education. The most profound contributions of Humboldt's were, therefore, in the field of psychology, ethics, aesthetics, linguistics and education in general.

In chapter VI of Ideen, "On ... National Education", we realize that Humboldt was aware of these obstacles and knew that some would be insurmountable: "Endlich steht dünkt mich, das Menschengeschlecht jetzt auf einer Stufe der Kultur, von welcher es sich nur durch Ausbildung der Individuen höher emporschwingen kann; und daher sind alle Einrichtungen, welche diese Ausbildung hindern, und die Menschen mehr in Massen zusammen drängen, jetzt schädlicher als ehemals."²⁷

Humboldt thought that the sudden impact of national education upon the mass of the people would be too profound a change. Mill says exactly the same thing in a different context: "A general state education is a mere contrivance for moulding people to be exactly like one another."²⁸

However, for the sake of the individual, Humboldt thought it worth while, in spite of all the difficulties; he knew that his ideas were relevant to a variety of social classes. In chapter VI, he enumerates the various institutions in a republic and in a monarchical state, no doubt having the French Revolution in mind, in which the State collapsed and new leaders came to the fore.

Humboldt, by advocating education for all and creating thereby a freer society, tried to compromise between Rousseau, the Greeks and the social order of his time. His proposals are not rigid, and he keeps the cultural background in mind. Education from his humanitarian background would have to change, first and foremost, the conditions of his fellow-men, who lived under great hardships which still included slavery.

CONCLUSION

In summing up all that has been said about Humboldt's ideas of self-cultivation and self-realization, we must see them in the light of an ever-changing society in which the individual finds himself being exposed to forces which work outwards from within. Humboldt laid great stress on these forces, which he named Kräfte; these are always at work in nature itself, and influence anyone coming in contact with the objective world.

Education is seen as an initiation into society, which has as its duty to make the individual aware of things and to see things for what they are; also to see them in the right perspective.

When Humboldt commenced his work, Ideen, after the French Revolution, he had already had instilled into him that nature must be aided, corrected and guided along the principles which Rousseau set out. However, the roots of his ideas were transposed from the Renaissance--the Age of Humanism, which at the time of the Renaissance meant rebirth from medieval fetters, but in the Age of Enlightenment meant rebirth from more orthodox traditions as imposed by the Church. The concept of Humanität in the eighteenth

century--only shared by a minority--was considered to be a transposition of those principles which had been preached by Erasmus in the Age of Humanism.

The eighteenth century, like most ages, looked both forward and backward in their search for models and enlightenment. The good taste of antiquity had become that of Diderot, who proclaimed that David's Belisarius, the blind general, was the starting point for the Neo-Classical movement, of which Humboldt was the first representative. Beauty, good taste and the sublime were revalued, and through Abbé Dubos, art was transposed into the practical sphere. Diderot had it in mind to change Man's way of thinking with his Encyclopédie, and Boileau had claimed that only the true is beautiful.

Humboldt looked to ancient Greece for the source of his inspiration, and his vision of Enlightenment was in total agreement with the ideas of Winckelmann as set out in his Gedanken über die Nachahmung der Griechischen Werke in der Malerei und Bildhauerkunst of 1755. His aim in life was to improve mankind by a better educational system, which would develop all the latent potentialities which could not find expression within the framework of the limited facilities available to the mass of the people.

Many of the thinkers of his age agreed that reforms were necessary due to the effects of the industrial revolution, but were unable to do as much as Humboldt because they were not in a position to execute their ideas. There was a dire need for education to make ordinary men feel competent with new implements and to master their own lives and environment. The sense of identity, Humboldt visualised,

could only be achieved within the individual himself. The vast differences of socio-cultural background, both its hereditary and psychological composition, had been taken into consideration by Humboldt in his advocacy of different schools for different abilities.

The true predecessor of all those who denied the reality and importance of genetic differences was Helvetius. What had previously been attributed to innate factors were, according to him, related to the fact that external influences cannot be the same even on two children brought up with their parents in the same surroundings. Yet to say that every mind begins as a blank, defiled of all sin and character, without ideas--Rousseau--is not to deny that children can be born with latent intellectual capacities that need outside stimulation to unfold and develop.

Education, then, as Humboldt, Pestalozzi, Froebel and other educationalists saw it, was a process by which Man's innermost potentials were raised into consciousness. Humboldt, furthermore, wanted to prevent education becoming a mere instrument of economy or other interests such as religion or political powers. He was anxious to discourage undue outside interference by governmental and other agencies in teaching as well as in higher institutions, including universities.

Humboldt, as well as Froebel, looks upon the child as an individual, distinctly separated from all other individuals. Froebel consequently lays more stress than Pestalozzi on spontaneity of action, the adaptation of all activities to the child's potentials, and on the active

co-operation of the teacher, whom he urges to live ("learn by doing"--Pestalozzi) with the children.

To Froebel and to Pestalozzi, joy as an inward reaction to self-activity was given priority. Froebel, closely followed by Spencer, believed that from early childhood to maturity the process of intellectual education should be one of self-instruction.

Humboldt shared the view of Locke, who had presented his ideas in Some thought on education [1695], considering freedom and equality the fundamental principles of education. Lessing rarely stepped out of his chosen part as a preacher of peace, tolerance and humanity, embracing all men and creeds. Humboldt's practical mind did not evade difficulties regarding upbringing, recommending foster parents if parents were not adequate in fulfilling their parental duties. But if one wants to change human nature, education would not be sufficient; the individual himself must actively take part where institutions fail.

Froebel, as well as Humboldt, believed that the individual would partake in his own fulfilment of personality by self-improvement. Education as initiation into some worthwhile activities stresses one educational ideal, often at the expense of others. Humboldt did not want an educated man, but a gebildeter Mensch, an all-round human being. He did not, however, envisage an authoritarian form of education, but a liberal and progressive one. The individual was only able to develop by a continuous interaction between inner and outer "self", which differs from culture to culture.

Humboldt, by and large, could not have foreseen all the difficulties which education within a complex society would bring, and a long period of searching as to whether formal or non-formal education is the best solution to the problem is still ahead of us. While formal education has not succeeded in the way in which the pioneers had hoped, there is little evidence that non-formal education has had any greater success, except in particular circumstances, where a personality of charisma is in charge. Although science has developed and progressed since Humboldt's days, theoretical conclusions of the problems of how to motivate and humanize Man for the sake of Humanität, as Humboldt visualized, will remain with us.

These problems, then, have not been clarified by either educationalists, psychologists or philosophers, and many of Humboldt's objectives, therefore, have been defeated by human nature since they involve the human mind and its thought processes, which do not stand up to tests, and cannot be explained by their very nature.

Therefore, to impose a uniform pattern on a complex society such as ours, with more complex minds, with different and diverging goals, is humanly impossible, but the educational system will still have to adapt itself all the time to the ever-changing demands of society.

To sum up on a positive note; Humboldt and his ideas have not failed, but have all the same been misinterpreted and misunderstood by society.

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